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Deputy CIA Director Wants DP Research Reviewed

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — Results of advanced research in computer hardware, software and other areas of electronics should be subject to U.S. intelligence agencies' review in order to restrict Soviet access to technology critical to national security, Deputy Central Intelligence Agency Director Adm. Bobby R. Inman said recently.

Unless researchers submit to a voluntary review system, they may be faced with more stringent, legislated measures, Inman told the annual meeting here of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) earlier this month.

Inman noted the National Security Agency (NSA) last year developed a voluntary review process for cryptographic research with the private sector. The process was initiated by Inman when he was head of NSA.

That process consists of submitting research findings to the Public Cryptography Study Group, formed by the American Council on Education and representing NSA and the U.S. scientific and academic communities. The committee's recommendations are advisory, and researchers are free to publish their work as they see fit.

"There are, in addition, other fields where publication of certain technical information could affect the national security in a harmful way," Inman told the AAAS. Examples include "computer hardware and software, other electronic gear and techniques, lasers, crop projections and manufacturing procedures," he said.

Opinion Backlash

Inman warned of a backlash of public and congressional opinion against the free access of foreign governments to U.S. technical knowledge. This could result in a wave of restrictive measures imposed on scientists, he said, claiming much of the Soviet military technology is already based on U.S. research.

Reaction to Inman's remarks among scientific and DP professional organizations has been generally negative, although representatives of several such groups contacted last week pointed out that Inman was not specific about how this voluntary censorship should be handled. They uniformly suggested that while technology diversion to the Soviet Union is a recognized problem, such censorship could have a chilling effect on the U.S. scientific community and hurt the U.S. more than the Soviet Union.

But, according to Inman, "scientists' blanket claims of scientific freedoms are somewhat disingenuous in light of the arrangements that academicians routinely make with private corporate sources of funding." National security concerns should be above "corporate, commercial interests."

Moreover, Inman told the association meeting, "much of the stimulating effort for computer science in this country came from government sponsored and controlled classified activity." He maintained that "science and national security have a symbiotic relationship — each benefitting from the interests, concerns and contributions of the other.

"In light of the long history of that relationship, the suggestion is hollow that science might be — or should be — kept apart from national security concerns or that national security concerns should not have an impact on 'scientific freedom,'" He said.